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CHALLIS NATIONAL FOREST  
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Near the Morgan Creek Summit, Challis National Forest

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
FOREST SERVICE

MF-11, R. 4

INTERMOUNTAIN REGION





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THE CHALLIS NATIONAL FOREST  
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1931



U.S. Department of Agriculture

The Challis National Forest, with an area of approximately 1,360,000 acres, is situated almost in the geographical center of the State of Idaho. It constitutes one of the main drain-



On Loon Creek

age areas of the Salmon River whose numerous tributaries, the largest and most important of which is the Middle Fork, have their sources within the forest. Rugged mountain ranges



and deep, narrow canyons are characteristic of this great interior region.

The forest headquarters is located in the town of Challis, the center of a fertile farming and stock-raising district on the main Salmon River. Access into this section is over auto roads from Salmon, Mackay, and Ketchum, all of which are railroad points, the latter two having connections with the Oregon Short Line. From the town of Challis the road extends up the Salmon River through Stanley Basin into the Cape Horn and Seafoam sections, with a side road leading up the Yankee Fork and over the Loon Creek Summit into the Loon Creek country. There is also a branch road from the main Salmon River Road north of Challis running up Morgan Creek



Yankee Fork below Bonanza

into Forney, from which a fairly good road leads to Meyers Cove on Camas Creek. Radiating from these roads the forest trail system reaches out to all the main points of attraction, including the Middle Fork, a wild, undeveloped country which is particularly attractive to big game hunters and fishermen as well as to the camper who seeks little-frequented country. Arrangements can be made at Challis, Stanley, and the various ranches in the valleys for the hire of competent guides, horses, and riding and packing equipment. The road from Ketchum extends over the Galena Summit and through the Sawtooth Valley, the extreme head of the Salmon River, into Stanley Basin where it connects with the Salmon River Road. An-

other road extends from the Landmark and the Penn Basin country on the Payette Forest over the Cape Horn Summit and connects with the road leading north and west from Stanley Basin.

Elevation of the forest ranges from about 3,800 feet, the lowest point on the Middle Fork, to the tips of the highest peaks which have an altitude of about 10,300 feet. From the higher ranges of perpetual snow the climatic transition is gradual to lower valleys along the main streams. The summer climate is ideal for outdoor life, with warm, sunshiny days and cool nights.



Milling operation on the Challis National Forest

## RESOURCES

### TIMBER

Approximately 80 per cent of the total area of the forest is timbered with dense stands of western yellow pine, Douglas fir, Engelmann spruce, and lodgepole pine, which are the principal species. The total estimated stand of this timber is four billion feet, board measure. While as yet a large portion of this timber is inaccessible and there is little demand for timber products other than for local usage, these lands must continue to produce this crop for the future needs of the country. The preservation of this valuable resource is one of the chief objectives of the Forest Service. By proper regulation of grazing and timber oper-



ations and the prevention of fire, a permanent ground cover is maintained which preserves moisture, prevents erosion, and regulates stream flow. Timber is sold freely, and local settlers are allowed free use of dry and defective timber, the removal of which is beneficial to the remaining thrifty portion of the stand. Cutting is regulated to provide for new and increased growth, and done with the least possible waste, through cutting low stumps and closely utilizing all sound material in the trees. In general, cutting is confined to mature timber which has practically ceased to grow. Green trees to be cut are carefully selected and marked. So far as possible, cutting is done so as to favor the most valuable species. Brush and débris are carefully disposed of by piling and burning, or by scattering over the area. The former method reduces the fire hazard.



Stanley Lake

## GRAZING

In this section of Idaho stock raising is one of the principal industries. And it is largely dependent upon the national forests for adequate summer range, without which the industry can not survive.

The Challis National Forest provides summer pasturage for 72,000 sheep and 8,500 cattle. The grazing of livestock upon the



CHALLIS NATIONAL FOREST  
IDAHO  
BOISE MERIDIAN  
1930

Scale  
1 2 3 4 Miles

LEGEND

- National Forest Boundary
- Adjacent National Forest Boundary
- Main motor highway
- Good motor road
- Poor motor road
- Road not passable to motors
- Trail
- Telephone line
- Supervisor's headquarters
- Ranger station
- Triangulation station
- House, cabin, or other building

IDAHO PRIMITIVE AREA



Compiled at Regional Office, Ogden, 1926.  
from U. S. G. S., G. L. O., Forest Service, and  
other sources by G. L. Nichols and S. L. Uziel.  
Compilation revised by M. W. Bird, 1929.  
Traced by G. L. Nichols, 1930.

Longitude west from Greenwich

Polycentric projection  
North American datum



forest is so regulated as to prevent overgrazing and the killing out of the forage plants, and to provide for full utilization of the grazing resource. Certain rules covering the management of stock on the range are in force and it is the aim to perpetuate and improve the range and thus insure a stable livestock industry.



“ Panning Gold ”

## MINING

Practically the entire area of the forest is mineralized. In the past mining activities played a very important part in the development of this part of the State. Old mining towns, with their mills and smelters, still stand as mementos of once prosperous days when these hills were being combed for riches. There is a certain fascination about these old camps and the stories of the hardships, the struggles, and the joys of the hardy pioneers and prospectors who blazed the trails into these little known and unexplored mountains. Owing to the great cost of transportation, the



handling of other than the high grade ores was prohibitive, but with improved methods of treating, this section should come into its own and mineral production far exceed that of the past. Prospecting and mining development are still important. This industry is dependent upon the forest for its lumber and timber supply, and even the most remote and inaccessible stands may prove to be of the highest value in the development of future mining camps and mining activities.



Old Custer Mill

#### How to stop a running fire:

Throw on dirt to reduce the heat and stop it temporarily. Plenty of good clean dirt will sometimes smother it entirely. Dig a trench around and close to the fire, removing inflammable material and digging down to mineral soil if possible. Then notify the nearest ranger.

## WATER

The mountain streams with their rapid fall and generous supply of water constitute a power resource of almost unlimited extent and are of great potential value in the future industrial development of this portion of the State. The full capacity of many of the smaller streams is used for irrigation purposes.



Lady Face Falls on Stanley Lake Creek, above Stanley Lake

Every forest fire means less water for stream  
flow and domestic use



## WILD LIFE

The Challis National Forest is one of the few localities of the West where many of the big game animals may be found in a limited territory. Deer are by far the most plentiful of these animals, and are widely distributed over practically the entire forest. Their main winter feeding grounds, which lie along the Middle Fork, are stocked to capacity from a forage production standpoint, and the problem of proper game management on these concentrated areas has become a serious one to which the Forest Service is devoting intensive study. Few elk or moose are found on the Challis Forest.



A native of the Challis National Forest

Mountain sheep and mountain goats are plentiful in the higher, rough and more inaccessible areas—their native haunts—and through adequate protection by the State laws they are increasing to some extent. Antelope are plentiful, although most of their range lies in the foothills adjoining the forest.

Black and brown bear are numerous and are found in practically all parts of the forest. Small game, including fur bearers and birds, is also abundant.

The cougar is found in many parts of the forest, particularly in the main game areas, where they prey heavily on other animals,



especially deer. Through the employment of hunters and the payment of bounty, the State is holding the numbers down, however, and a good many cougar are bagged each year. A cougar hunt is full of thrills, but the cougar can be hunted successfully only with dogs. They are seldom seen until treed by the dogs. Coyotes and bobcats are numerous.

Fishing is one of the main attractions and trout are plentiful in nearly all of the streams and lakes. One of the favored sports is "hunting" the big salmon in the side streams. These big fellows are plentiful during the time of their run from the ocean and are taken by



**A successful cougar hunt**

means of spears. Runs of steelhead trout occur in May and June on the headwaters, and chinook and sockeye salmon run from June to September 15.

### **HOT SPRINGS**

There are many mineral springs within the forest, varying in temperature from lukewarm to the boiling point. Some of them, and perhaps the most interesting, are reached by pack trails only, while others are found on or near automobile roads.

**Guard against stream pollution**



## RECREATION

The Challis Forest offers all the usual recreation attractions. There are countless numbers of beautiful camping sites as well as those suitable for the building of summer homes and resorts. Almost any choice as to location may be gratified, on the shore of a sparkling lake, beside the rippling waters of a singing stream, or secluded in the depths of



Mountain sheep on the Challis

the forest. One has the choice of sites which are readily accessible by automobile and near settlement, or far removed in the very heart of the wilds and big game ranges. Leases may be secured covering uses of most any nature, such as summer homes, lodges, etc.

A few of the interesting trips which may be taken are briefly described:

From Challis the trip up the Salmon River by auto is one well worth while. For nearly the entire distance of 60 miles to Stanley Basin the route is picturesque, through a deep canyon with rapids and pools fringed with evergreen. En route the traveler passes the old mining town of Clayton where gas and provisions are available at two general stores, and where hotel accommodations may be had. The next stop of interest is Robinson Bar, which furnishes hotel accommodations and has a hot mineral spring with a fine large swimming pool. Side trips for hunting, fishing, and mountain climbing may be made from here. Four miles beyond Robinson Bar is the Sunbeam Dam and



On the Salmon River above Sunbeam Dam

the mouth of Yankee Fork. In the days of mining activity this concrete dam was thrown across the gorge of the main river to develop electric power. Gas and campers' supplies can be procured here. From this point a side road leads up the Yankee Fork to the old mining towns of Bonanza and Custer. The Yankee Fork has many beautiful camp sites along its shores; and fishing, salmon hunting, and deer hunting may be had during the proper seasons. This road also extends over the Loon Creek Summit into the Loon Creek drainage. On the Loon Creek side the road requires careful driving for safety. From Boyle's Ranch on Loon Creek, where good accommodations may



be obtained, interesting pack trips may be taken in any direction to fine fishing, large game areas, and mountain peaks. A good pack trail follows down Loon Creek to the Middle Fork. En route an interesting side trip may be taken up Warm Spring Creek. A good trail follows up this narrow canyon. Here one will find the Shower Bath Springs, where large streams of hot water spurt forth from the cliffs. The Middle Fork, with its pure crystal waters, foaming and dashing rapids, and deep pools, is a fisherman's paradise. Part of it is within the Idaho Primitive Area. It is also the center of the big game district, and on its slopes, which contribute largely to the main winter game range, deer may be seen during most of the year.

From Sunbeam Dam one may continue up the river into Stanley Basin. Two miles below Stanley the Forest Service has improved camp grounds for the benefit of the public. Approaching Stanley one obtains the first view of the Sawtooth Range, with its crags and pinnacles, towering above the surrounding landscape. Hotel accommodations and supplies are available at Stanley. Fishing is good in the neighboring streams and camp sites are plentiful. Side trips can be made by auto to Stanley and Redfish Lakes where there are improved camp grounds. The Sawtooth Range presents opportunities to test one's skill in mountain climbing, and here one may find the mountain goat in his favorite range. From Stanley the trip can be continued by auto into the Cape Horn country, a wide mountain valley with broad meadows. Fishing is good in the various streams and camp sites are many. At the Cape Horn Hot Springs hotel accommodations are available or cabins may be rented at a reasonable figure. An outdoor swimming pool has been provided for guests. The road continues beyond the Springs, crossing Beaver Creek, a typical mountain stream with good fishing and camping. The main road continues over the Vanity Summit into the Seafoam and Rapid River section. This region is similar to that on Loon Creek, and interesting side trips can be made over pack trails in almost any direction. The headwaters of the Middle Fork are easily accessible from here by trail. Fishing is excellent in the

streams and lakes, and this country is also noted for its big game.

The Idaho Primitive Area, comprising approximately one million acres of national forest land closed to public roads, and established to conserve primitive conditions of environment, habitation, subsistence, and transportation, is partly within the Challis Forest. It is bounded on the north by the main Salmon River; on the east by the Big Horn Craigs, Yellowjacket Range, and Sleeping Deer Mountain; on the south by a line approximately four miles south of and paralleling the Middle Fork of Salmon River west to Rapid Creek; and on the west by the divide which forms the western limits of the watersheds of Marble, Monumental, Beaver, and Chamberlain Creeks.



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**Hotel at Robinson Bar**

It can be entered from the south by following up Yankee Fork Road to Boyle's ranch, securing saddle and pack animals, and going down Loon Creek. It also may be reached via the Beaver Creek road and the horseback trail down Rapid River. There is no regular outfitting place at Rapid River, but in the fall outfitting camps are usually established here. It can be entered too via Morgan Creek road to Meyers Cove where saddle and pack stock may be secured. Travel from here is by trail down Camas Creek.

Fishing and big game hunting are both good in this Primitive Area.



Visitors are always welcome in the national forests. Forest officers are only too glad to help them by giving information or assisting in other ways to make their trips pleasant and enjoyable. In return the Forest Service asks only the whole-hearted cooperation of the people in protecting the vast forest resources from injury and destruction. Keep the streams pure and do not contaminate them, for they furnish water to other campers and settlements below you. Leave your camps clean by burying and burning your refuse. Think of the party who comes after you. The Service spends time and money each year in placing directional and object signs for the benefit of the public. Do not mutilate or destroy them. Observe the State Fish and Game Laws. The Forest Service telephone system connects all



Little redfish found in Stanley Lake

the main parts of the forest with the town of Challis, where connection may be secured with the Mountain States Telephone System. The use of all Service lines is free to the public.

#### AIMS

National Forest administration aims—

To insure protection of watersheds.

To produce more and better timber and forage.

To produce more and better fish and game.

To preserve recreational and scenic values.

To secure wise use of all these resources permanently.

To encourage bona fide use of mineral resources.

In brief, national forests are managed for the largest beneficial returns to the largest number of people.



Stanley Basin and Sawtooth Range

F-150292

## FIRE

Fire is the greatest enemy of the forests and destroys all in its path. Wild life, as well as human lives, have no exemption. More than two-thirds of the forest fires are caused by human carelessness. Resources of untold value are destroyed annually and thousands of dollars are expended to suppress and control these fires. These forests are the property of the people; you are part owner. You can help to prevent this waste by being careful with fire in the mountains and observing the following rules:

1. Be sure your match is out. Break it in two before you throw it away.

2. Throw pipe ashes and cigar and cigarette stubs in the dust of the road and stamp or pinch out the fire before leaving them. Don't throw them into brush, leaves, or needles.

3. Build a small camp fire. Build it in the open, not against a tree or log or near brush. Scrape away the litter all around it.

4. Never leave a camp fire, even for a short time, without quenching it with water or earth.

5. Never build bonfires in windy weather or where there is the slightest danger of their escaping.

6. If you find a fire try to put it out. If you can't, get word to the nearest forest officer, or State fire warden at once.





## ***SPORTSMEN'S CODE***

1. There is more honor in giving the game a square deal than in getting the limit.
2. Help enforce the game laws. Game and fish are public property for the enjoyment of both yourself and the fellow who comes after you. Violations of game laws should be reported to the nearest deputy game warden or forest ranger.
3. Respect the ranchman's property. Do not leave his gates open, break down his fences, disturb his stock, or shoot near his dwelling. Put yourself in his place. Ask his permission to hunt on his premises.
4. Be careful with your camp fire and matches. One tree will make a million matches; one match can burn a million trees.
5. Leave a clean camp.
6. Put out all forest fires discovered if you can. If you can not put them out report them promptly to the nearest forest officer.





## ***SIX RULES FOR HEALTH PROTECTION***

1. **Purification.**—Mountain streams will not purify themselves in a few hundred feet. Boil or chlorinate all suspected water.
2. **Garbage.**—Burn or bury all garbage, papers, tin cans, and old clothes.
3. **Excretions.**—Bury a foot deep all human excrement, at least 200 feet from streams, lakes, or springs.
4. **Washings.**—Do not wash soiled clothing, utensils, or bodies in streams, lakes, or springs. Use a container and throw dirty water on ground away from water supply.
5. **Toilets.**—Use public toilets where available. They are properly located. Toilets should be at least 200 feet from streams and not in gulches.
6. **Observe Laws.**—Observe rules and endeavor to have others do the same. National and State laws inflict heavy penalties for health law violators. Report all violations or insanitary conditions (including dead animals) to nearest health officer or United States Forest Officer.





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